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MYTHS AND FOLK-TALES OF THE RUSSIANS, WESTERN SLAVS, AND MAGYARS. By JEREMIAH CURTIN. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1890. 8vo, pp. xxv., 545.

Mr. Curtin has placed the student of folk-lore under increased obligations by the publication of this work, which manifests the same careful attention to details and fidelity of interpretation so pleasantly noticeable in his earlier volume on the "Myths and Folk-Lore of Ireland."

On page 303 we find the curious statement that a princess would marry the man who should prove himself able to make shoes and clothes for her "without measure."

It may be straining parallelisms a little, but the temptation cannot be resisted of placing on record that this brings to mind the ancient marriage customs of our own aborigines, which included, in many cases, some such tribute from suitor to maiden. Thus, among the Zuñis, the lover would make a pair of moccasins for the girl of his choice; the Apache would cut out and sew a dress for her.

In the story of "Three Kingdoms," and in "Vasilissa, Golden Tress," the whirlwind is deified; to the apprehension of the Apache and many another redskin, the whirlwind is a "chidin," or ghost, on its travels.

The Indian medicine man would promptly claim as his own property the cap of invisibility described in "The Footless and Blind Champions."

The necessity of personal purification before attempting deeds of magic or prowess, is inculcated in "Kostchi without Death," and would be highly approved of by every aboriginal American whose opinion on the subject might be sought. It is true that the Russian hero was going to mass; but that was only a link in the chain of events, a prelude to the programme.

Throughout the volume there are many examples of Lycanthropy, or the transmutation from the human creature to the animal. The American Indian would accept this statement without a quiver of the eyelids. It is the same power which he believes, and which his old men have practised for generations; it is the same thing which our forefathers held as gospel truth. Ordinances against were-wolves prevailed in France down to the reign of Louis XIV. It is not impossible that this widely disseminated belief had some humanizing effect upon the sacrificial rites of primitive society. The animal whose power to transform itself into a man, and *vice versa*, was duly recognized by priest and layman, must be, in sacrifices of efficacy, equal to that of the human victim it represented, and for whom it was soon substituted.

The American Indian's belief in an underground world is repeated in "Mirko, the King's Son," in the Magyar myths.

There is a very curious ceremony alluded to on page 89, "kissing a cow under the tail." The Abbé Dubois, in his "History of the Peoples of India," London, 1809, tells us that this was a religious ceremony in the East.

To sum up, it may be said that Mr. Curtin's two books will give the general reader a fund of interesting knowledge concerning the myths and superstitions of two great branches of the human family.

*John G. Bourke.*